

Press-Herald

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Graduation Time Nears

Graduation time will soon come again. Armies of young people will venture out into what they hope will be an exciting and receptive world.

It will, for a certainty, be a world which is vastly different from that their forebears knew. It is troubled, complex, and restive. Its demands are enormous and implacable. Change takes place at a dizzying pace. The challenges are all but endless.

Yet, at the same time, it is a world of marvelous opportunity. New frontiers are constantly being opened—in industry, business, government, medicine, the physical sciences. In the space of a few years, more material progress has been made than in preceding centuries. And the future will bring more and greater wonders—all the way from homes of virtually incredible comfort and convenience to the landing of human beings on the moon.

The world will welcome the young people who will soon leave the schools and colleges. In return, it will ask much of them. It will, often, require skills that didn't even exist a comparatively short time ago. Above all, it will demand a willingness to keep on learning. For formal education is a beginning and not an end in itself.

One more thing may be said. Surrounded as we are by material abundance and achievement, it is easy to lose sight of the old spiritual virtues. But, without them, the world is essentially meaningless and empty. This is a truth that never changes—and a truth that, one profoundly hopes, our young people will not forget.

The Job Blood Can Do

Any wedding is news. But the marriage recently of Judith Ann White, 20-year-old Ashland, Mass., girl, was so outstanding an event that congratulatory messages came from President Johnson and movie star Gregory Peck while newspapers across the country featured the story.

The reason was that eight and a half years ago Judith's bathrobe caught fire as she was heating milk for her puppy. She was so badly burned over three fourths of her body that her chances of living were considered only one in a hundred.

But at Chelsea Naval Hospital in Boston where she was taken (she is a Navy man's daughter) there was fine care and a blood bank with not only enough blood to bring her out of shock but to supply blood for 77 transfusions during 40 operations which saved both her life and her beauty.

If anything were needed to prove the value of the volunteer blood donor programs of the American Association of Blood Banks and the American Red Cross, we believe the story of Judith Ann White does it.

We cannot all be doctors or run hospitals but all of us between 21 and 60 who are in good health can give blood. If you are not recorded at your nearest blood bank or collection center, you should be.

OTHERS SAY:

Life is like riding a commuter train—someone is always around to tell you where to get off.—Ron. L. Coffman, Grove City (Ohio) Record.

"Many people consider the things which government does for them to be social progress, but they consider the things government does for others as socialism."—St. Cloud (Fla.) News.

Just found out the theme song for impatient photographers: "Some Day My Prints Will Come."—C. U. Weakley, Town and Country, Pennsburg, Pa.

Don't always give your wife credit; she appreciates a little cash, too.—William L. Ziegler, The New Oxford (Pa.) Item.

The reason the boys of the Great Society are liberal is because it doesn't cost them anything to think ways of spending other people's money.—George B. Bowra, Aztec (N.M.) Independent Review.

"As David Lawrence tells, the longshoremen strike has already cost two and a half billion dollars. That's how expensive those labor wars are—no less than the other wars. But whoever disagrees with these wars, is against the working people. Suppose all of us would act like those big labor unions? What kind of country would this be?"—Moulton (Texas) Eagle.

"News releases indicate that union leaders throughout the nation have agreed that 'nationalization' of the country's railroad system should be undertaken. The allegation is that private ownership is not sufficiently concerned with service to the public. Logically, the step would be for the powerful unions in the printing and publishing field to 'nationalize' the field of communications—press, radio, television. This could be the vital step . . . for federal control of mass media (and) could make certain that thorough indoctrination of 'approved' policies would result in public approval and compliance."—Junction City (Ore.) Times.

"It's said 'You can't take it with you,' but have you ever tried to take a trip without it?"—Benton (Mo.) Democrat.

"Everything is going fine with people and prosperity but the problem is poverty."—Aztec (N.M.) Independent-Review.



ROYCE BRIER

A War With Paper Bombs Is Still a Silly Action

In the winter of 1939-40, after the fall of Poland, it was quiet in the West, the Phony War.

Perhaps it was not smart of Herr Hitler to give the British time to build toward the Battle of Britain, but maybe he had to build, too. In any case, no bombs fell. In fact, the British hadn't many to drop.

So they conceived a plan of dispatching a small fleet of planes nightly to shower the German people with propaganda leaflets. This was under Prime Minister Chamberlain (Winston Churchill had not yet emerged), and many considered it soft-headed.

The flight might have been good training for future British pilots, but the tactic was indeed soft-headed, because the Germans were not waging war without reason. They were waging war because Herr Hitler proposed to knock out the Continent and he had first to overcome the British will to resist him.

Thus the leaflets, telling the Germans the war was a senseless aggression, were themselves senseless. They ignored the causes of the state of war, and sought by suasion to cure it.

This is about like applying iodine to a cancerous growth. Now somebody on our side in Viet Nam is engaged in the leaflet bit, and it's just as soft-headed in 1965 as it was in 1939.

The Vietnamese have long wanted to paper-bomb their enemies, and the United States restrained them. But now our "spokesman" concedes we are participating in such strikes over some cities south of Hanoi. The leaflets carry President Johnson's offer to negotiate a settlement, and tell the North Vietnamese the Red Chinese are very naughty people who mean no good in Indo-China.

Now put yourself in the place of a Viet Cong guerrilla or North Vietnamese, picking up one of these

sheets. What is Red China? An entity about as close to you as the planet Mars. President Johnson, who he? Why, he is the chief liar and chief boss of the dirty imperialist Americans, and all you know say so—your friends, your bosses, your newspapers, your radio.

So you laugh, and show it to your friends, who laugh, and you all go about your business, which is scrounging enough rice for the day, that you may knock off as many of the enemy as you can, and so ultimately knock off those slave-driving ogres who rule in Saigon.

It is submitted here that this is as far as these leaflets will ever get, though you strew them about in the billions. That war exists because a large segment of the Indo-Chinese hate the structure centered in Saigon. Telling them the Saigon folk are really nice people if you know them is about the silliest stroke of futility we, the Americans, have lately undertaken.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Legacy of Allen's Alley: A Notable Set of Letters

Few books appear any more that make you laugh. So I am grateful for "Fred Allen's Letters," collected by magazine writer Joe McCarthy. Some of this had me shaking with laughter as few things have since Allen's great satirical radio programs of the 1930s and '40s. You remember Fred, and "Allen's Alley." Among other things he hated sham, and took apart the pop-jays in advertising and broadcasting. Network vice presidents and other destructive forces in the mass culture withered under his barbed appraisals.

Allen had the ability to delight the highbrow, as well as the middlebrow, and mug. One of his greatest

fans, the late James Thurber, wrote: "You could count on the thumb of one hand the American who is at once a comedian, a humorist, a wit and a satirist, and his name is Fred Allen."

Allen always wanted to be a full-time writer, his editor tells us. One reason he devoted so much time to turning out letters was the satisfaction he found at the typewriter. That, and the fact that his scripts (he wrote most of them himself) were torn apart and censored by sponsors and the network vice presidents he lampooned. When he died in 1956, Allen's widow, Portland Hoffa, collected thousands of Fred's letters to friends, fans, show business people, others.

Like Don Marquis' "mehitabel," Allen typed in lower case. He never erased, but turned his mistakes into jokes which denounced the typewriter for butting in. To Groucho Marx: "You don't have to think, you keep typing along and your typewriter keeps making up puns and gags by itself: I will come home some night and find that the typewriter is gone and is working as a writer for Jackie Gleason."

Things were usually getting back to sub-normal for

Allen. The temptation is to quote from him at length, but this doesn't work. For like Thurber, Allen's humor rarely depended on the immediate guffaw, but on the tone and sustained satire of his pieces. Many suggested that Allen turn professional writer, but the veteran comedy juggler from vaudeville declined. To Thurber he wrote: "Many years ago Harold Ross wanted to try and make a writer of me. I told Harold that when I saw what (Thurber) was writing, I planned to insert my quill back into the fowl."

Reading this collection is like a playback of your favorite Allen shows. It's better, because Allen the human being, rather than the performer, comes through loud, clear and uncensored in these delightful, ribald, and sometimes eloquent papers.

Often Allen would simply send clippings of great utterances to his friends. One of his most eloquent communications went to Nunnally Johnson, the Hollywood writer-producer. This described the religious fervor of Jane Russell. "I love God," the actress was quoted, "and when you get to know Him you find He's a livin' Doll." Allen's eloquence here was unparalleled. Absolutely no comment at all.

Protest to Appeals Board On Taxes, Not Assessment

By PHILIP E. WATSON
County Assessor

At the time the legislature was considering the law to change the period for filing equalization petitions from July to late fall, I warned that setting a filing period that overlapped with the delivery of tax bills would, in all probability, produce a flood of petitions provoked by high taxes rather than a high assessment.

I strongly supported that part of the bill which extended the filing period from two weeks to two months. An adequate filing period, together with prior notification of any assessment change would, I felt, fulfill the responsibility of local government to afford every taxpayer an adequate chance to protest his assessment.

These were issues on which I campaigned and on which I have strong feelings. While it is ultimately the taxpayer's responsibility to be informed of his assessment and to file within the specified time limits, it was not reasonable to limit filing to a two-week period without giving him any notification.

Despite this warning, the legislature approved a two-month filing period from the fourth Monday in September through the fourth Monday in November. The result was a record-breaking number of petitions filed—6,264 applications covering 13,023 parcels of property.

By itself, the number of petitions is not too meaningful. One might reasonably expect a larger volume since the filing period was four times as long. Also, for the first time, property owners had advance notice of any change in their assessments since we published this information in the community newspapers; and also for the first time, petitions were to be heard by the new Tax Appeals Boards instead of by the Board of Supervisors.

Our Department has just completed a study on the first year's operation under all these first-time conditions.

Altogether, the two-month period allowed 38 working days for filing. In the first 25 days of filing prior to the delivery of the tax bills, 539 petitions covering 1,090 parcels of property were received. In the last 13 days of filing, after the bills were delivered, everything was multiplied by 10. There were 5,725 petitions filed covering 11,933 parcels!

Before people filed, they were encouraged to discuss their assessment with our appraisers so we could explain how we had formed our market value appraisal and that assessments were made at 25 per cent of that value. It was the judgment of our appraisers that those petitioners who filed prior to delivery of the bills generally had a genuine difference of opinion with us over the market value of their property, while those who filed after they had received their bills wanted to talk about the size of the bill rather than the size of the assessment.

Time after time, our appraisers said, the taxpayers told them, "I agree that you are right about what my property is worth, but I can't afford to pay this much in taxes."

One leader of a large protest group began his testimony before the Tax Appeals Board by stating publicly that our assessments were at 25 per cent of market value but that he was there because taxes were too high.

Our summary report compared the disposition of cases filed before and after delivery of the bills. Of the 1,090 parcels filed on or before Nov. 3, 433 were granted some reduction. Of the 11,933 parcels protested after Nov. 3, only 3,769 were granted some reduction.

Lending support to our original impression that the early filings were on sounder grounds than the later ones is the statistic that, after a review of each protested parcel, our appraisal

staff recommended reductions on 29 per cent of the filings before Nov. 3 but only 6 per cent of the filings after Nov. 3.

Another significant statistic, we think, is that the owners of all but 50 of the first 1,090 protested parcels appeared for their scheduled hearings. However, in the post-tax bill filings, the owners of 2,810 parcels either withdrew their petitions or didn't bother to show up for a hearing.

The two major group petitions, both organized after bills had been received, were from Santa Monica and Alhambra. In the case of Santa Monica, 13 reductions were granted out of a total of 689 applicants, 391 of whom did not appear for the hearing. The Alhambra group consisted of 778 applicants, 560 of whom either withdrew or did not appear; 36 applicants received some reduction.

Two final statistics: Reductions totaling \$161,610, 980 were requested and \$17,900,000 was granted. The cost of the Assessor's Department was just under \$327,000 for clerical and appraisal time devoted to preparing cases and testifying before the boards.

HERB CAEN

How to Start a Day All Wrong

HOW TO START the day all wrong: Reading in the papers that (1) a drunk driver who killed a man was sentenced to three months in jail, whereas (2) an accountant who failed to file his income tax return got six months. Moral: Taxes are more certain than death.

JUST CALL ME Mister Good News: Whisky says the Internal Revenue Service, is deductible! All you've got to prove is that your doctor prescribed it for medicinal purposes (and if he won't go along with you, vote for Medicare) . . . Flash: Willie Mays is the oldest player in the big leagues! How we know is that at fancy Town School the other day, the kids were comparing the ages of their fathers, and Willie's five-year-old Michael topped everybody. "My Daddy," he said proudly, "is 52!" It must be true because kids don't lie . . . Hottest item on Washington's dinner tables these nights: the chicken tamales served by Chief Justice Earl Warren. He has 'em shipped in regularly from Joe Maita's Golden West restaurant in Oakland . . . Ivy Baker Priest, the one-time U.S. Treasurer (under Ike), is fixin' to run for State Treasurer, now that she has sunk her roots in California soil . . . Fred MacMurray and his wife (THAT's what became of June Haver) were belting the sparkling apple cider at Johnny Kan's, and bought a case to take with them.

CAENFETTI: The Moiseyev Dancers, who stayed at the Canterbury, ate the place out of oranges and tomatoes every day, if you're looking for the secret of their prodigious leaps (or maybe they were just worried about heriberi) . . . Singer Pat Suzuki, having been divorced in Mexico the other day by Photographer Mark Shaw, was celebrating at Kuo Wah with Atty. Zeppelin Wong, who, despite his name, does NOT live in a dirigible hanger . . . Pancho Gonzales, the greatest tennis player in history, next to your candidate, will take a house in the Bay Area this Fall, to reside as pro over the elegant tennis club (four sunken courts to be built at Doris Day's Palo Alto Cabana) . . . Babe Hutton, with her Prince in tow, asked for the Presidential Suite when they checked in at the Fairmont the other night, but no soapers: Joan Crawford, Pepsi's traveling saleslady, had a grip of steel on it . . . Roger Smith, late of the hungry i, got a Mexican divorce (in Juarez), meaning he is free to marry Ann-Margaret here and now, or even there and then.

DEAR HEARTS & GENTLE PEEPHOLES: Actress Stella Stevens, who has been the fold-out nude in Playboy often enough to develop creases in her knees and chest, was at the Roaring Twenties the other night fully dressed and in her bright mind; her target: Gary Graham, leader of the Poor Boys . . . In answer to ever so many questions, the red-letter word, "SEX" on Blue Chip Stamps is simply an identification code, and does not mean the stamps are redeemable for same, sorry and yrwelcome.

Morning Report:

All kinds of possible disasters hang over the heads of our troops in Viet Nam. Senator Thomas Dodd, of Connecticut, has suggested another. He wants to send a congressional committee to the battle scene to make a report.

So far we have been able to turn back enemy MIGs in the air and infiltrating Viet Congs on the ground. But no American outfit could withstand a fully-manned assault from our statesmen. In 1961, a congressional committee visited Bull Run and it took the Army of the Potomac years to recover.

Instead, I suggest a ceasefire in Washington. The Pentagon will agree to write no laws and the Congress will stack its arms.

Abe Mellinkoff